

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The carbon layer forming method starts a film deposition process of a carbon layer by vapor phase deposition after a content of particles having a particle size of 0.5  $\mu\text{m}$  or more is adjusted in a film deposition system of the carbon layer to 1000 particles/ $\text{ft}^3/\text{min}$  or less. The carbon layer forming method by means of a vapor phase deposition technique such as sputtering or CVD ensures that a high-quality carbon layer having significantly reduced pinholes or cracks can be obtained. Since the carbon protective layer obtained by this method has no cracking and delamination due to pinholes and cracks, the thermal head having the carbon protective layer has a sufficient durability to ensure that high reliability is exhibited over an extended period of time to perform thermal recording of high-quality images consistently over an extended period of operation.

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